Actual rate of inflation (for Essential Commodities

2300. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the actual rate of inflation is more than fifteen per cent in respect of essential commodities consumed generally by common man;

(b) if not, the basis for computing the price index in respect of essential items;

(c) whether Government will provide any relief to Government/Semi-Government/Public Sector staff to compensate for erosion in their wages due to abnormally high rate of inflation arising from administered price hike of petrol, diesel and railway freight; and

(d) if so, the quantum of relief being contemplated?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Annual inflation rate based on wholesale price index of 30 essential commodities taken together and that of 31 essential commodities based on retail price index during 1995-96 and 1996-97 is listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Annual Rate of Inflation of Essential Commodities

(per cent)

Year	Month	Whole-sale Price Index (1981-82) All Essential		Retail Price Index (1982)	
		commo-dities	commo-dities	General	Essential commo-dities
1995	April	10.0	9.1	9.7	10.1
	May	9.9	7.4	10.3	10.1
	June	9.1	7.0	10.5	13.4
	July	8.8	9.3	11.4	13.2
	August	8.8	7.3	10.9	13.3
	September	8.9	8.0	10.1	13.2
	October	8.4	7.5	10.4	12.7
	November	8.4	7.4	10.3	15.5
	December	6.4	5.0	9.7	11.4
1996	January	5.0	3.5	9.0	10.1
	February	4.6	3.4	8.6	9.7
	March	5.1	3.9	8.9	8.7
	April	5.0	4.9	9.8	9.7
	May	4.5	4.9	9.3	10.2
	June	4.6	5.8		
	July	5.0	5.0		

(c) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(d) Question does not arise.

Operation of small aircraft from Madras to Velankanni

2301. SHRI O.S. MANIAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to operate a small aircraft from Madras to the great pilgrim centre of Velankanni;

(b) if so, what action has been taken so far; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?